

1 TIMOTHY 3:2

The Husband Of One Wife

By Benny Maynard

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Introduction

I must say on the very outset, that I am King James Only. I do not know Greek, but I do own a few Greek dictionaries that I use for word definitions. I shy away from any dictionaries that are not Textus Receptus. There are many interpretations gone awry, from the Westcot and Hort influence in some dictionaries. I have been saved long enough to remember the time, when a bible believing church would not touch any version, other than the KJV. Liberal churches used other versions. But, I also had the privilege to be on hand in the town of Greenville SC, (jokingly called by one preacher “the Mecca of fundamentalism”) when the use of other versions began to creep into the churches. The methods used to accomplish this creeping in, were based on some statements and ideas that were used to soften church members to the notion of using other versions. Versions that are vastly different from the then adhered to, King James Version. These methods are as follows:

1. Correcting the English with the Greek. There is nothing wrong with using the proper definition of words to expand the meaning or shed light on a doctrine or interpretation of a passage of scripture. But when practiced constantly by clergymen, and college professors, and referring to the Greek as if there is no other way to get the most out of a passage, will begin to give the idea that, there is something inferior with the bible you have. It gives the listener the impression that you cannot understand the bible, and you need a scholarly preacher or a college that knows and understands the Greek language.
2. This is what all the learned men believe. This came in the form of Greek scholars. If you were KJV only you were deemed as some kind of inferior, unlearned hillbilly. Before long the churches were being labeled as associated with a certain college and not solely governed by a Pastor. This is not biblical. If there is a college, it should be operated by a church. Believe me, in Greenville SC, there were churches that adopted their code of dress, code of race ethics, music standards and many other practice's by what the local college dictated. These people associated with the college made up most of the membership of many Baptist churches. To go against the college could mean you could clear out about half of the membership. So when the college started using other versions, people swallowed it hook, line and sinker.
3. We teach and preach out of the KJV. This meant it is OK to use other versions for study. This also means the idea of a word perfect bible is sold down the river. This adopts the idea of “authoritative message preservation”. The preservation taught in the bible is “word preservation”, Psalm 12, Matthew 24:35. You CANNOT use different versions that are missing thousands of words, and believe in a word perfect bible. Although, the proponents love the double talk of saying their bible is perfect, but is thousands of words different. This is because they believe in message preservation, and there is not one verse in the bible that proves message preservation.

This method was used, in the beginning, to condition people to the idea of accepting other versions. I actually have seen church members change from being KJV only, to reading out of a NIV or some other version within a year of being “softened” to the notion of another version. This is following man, not the bible. This conditioning came about by point one above, then gradually woven in with point two above. These conditioning idea’s, made it easy for many pastor’s to change the beliefs of his members. Their foundation of “thus saith the Lord” was slowly changed to “this is what men say”. Now, many of these churches are now full blown, NIV, NAS, etc churches. Their standards have been compromised, and the bible knowledge of the average member has been diminished, not expanded. It is difficult in this day to even strike up a good argument, because church members do not know what they believe and are not interested in learning. Reread point one above. This was all started with something normal and in many cases contained truth, but was over-used, and for the wrong reason (to glorify man), and it led to the apathy toward God’s word we see today.

I believe in a word perfect bible, and that being in the KJV. If the scriptures teach word perfect, that word perfect must be in something, and not scattered all over the place for a scholar to determine the real, original words. New versions have bred false doctrine and apathy. For the most part (for you Americans, notice I didn’t say “in every case”) you will find, that a person with a form of godliness that denies certain doctrines of the bible, usually uses another version. Because he has compromised the belief, of a word perfect bible, he can believe anything, or doubt anything, because his bible is “just a translation”. I remind you, God puts His Word above his own name (Psalm 138).

This is the reason that I must with faith, believe the bible God has used and has given us. The bible is the Word of God, not manuscripts I have never seen (or for that matter, anyone alive has ever seen). The bible is not Strong’s concordance and surely not Vine’s. The bible is not the commentaries. In this study, the scriptures will be used to determine the interpretation of this important subject.

Matthew 4:4 Man shall not live by bread alone, but by **every word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Is your God big enough and powerful enough to give you “every word” like He said? Or, do you have God on a technicality, and you have found something that God cannot do? Even though he says in his word He can. Oh, you would never admit that, but you sure practice it, and defend it, by using a bible that has thousands of words missing.

So, I will do my best in this study, to build up God’s Word and not cast doubt. The scriptures will be used to determine the mind of God on what is meant in the statement “Husband of one wife”. I will try to accomplish this by comparing scripture with scripture and not quoting Greek. This is not meant to be an exhaustive study of every verse on divorce and remarriage. But it is a study of the term “husband of one wife”. It is not taking into consideration, what liberals think on this subject. Liberals do what they want anyway (concerning divorce and remarriage), because God will forgive them. What is considered in this study, is the interpretations of those who do believe the bible, and are trying to establish their beliefs in harmony with the whole bible.

Part 1

Preface: Overview Of the Three Positions

Basically, the interpretations of 1 Timothy 3:2 have fallen into three beliefs:

Position 1

1. A Bishop, Overseer or Pastor (and Deacon) cannot have but one living wife. If he has remarried, then his first wife must be dead for him to Pastor. He cannot be divorced and remarried. The objective of the Bishop is to be blameless and to rule his house well (vs 4). If he is divorced, especially during his time as Pastor, it means he did not rule his own house well. If he remarries (or has ever been remarried in his life), being that marriage is one flesh, then he is adding to himself, more wives, as the woman at the well was with husbands (thou hast had 5 husbands, John 4:18). Being that the Bishop is to be set apart and an example to the flock (1 Pet. 5:3), it is permissible for laymen to be divorced and remarried, but only for the cause of fornication.

I must add a note with this belief. It is very safe ground. This is the ideal situation for the Pastor. But, anyone that has read their bible through a few times knows it takes some hard study and digging to harmonize the passages that the Bible gives us on divorce and remarriage. Once you begin to do that, there will be questions that will still be unanswered. There will be areas that are not completely understood. There will be knowledge of why there are different interpretations.

Personally, I know men that live on this safe ground. And honestly, it is better to be safe than to instruct people wrongly and in a way that will make people too permissible. It is still true, God wants a marriage to be “til death do us part”. Many pastors have been in the ministry for years and they have never made a serious study of the subject, because technically, what he believes is right and the safest way to be. In fact, this has been applied to many areas in the church, other than the bishop and deacon. That is a fine and safe standard, as long as he does not find himself divorced. Then, he may begin to dig. But in the long run, it is not fair to apply this rule and attitude to his parishioners. Many divorced people are treated like second class citizens. I know this by experience. I am not trying to be critical, when a man takes that stand. But I believe it to be better to try to consider and think through what the bible has to say on the subject in order to be fair.

Position 2

2. It is referring to polygamy, having multiple wives. This has been a popular interpretation in church history. There will be more comments on this interpretation to follow. It is my belief that polygamy is ruled out as an interpretation, when studied in the relation to the statement on widows given in the same book, 1 Timothy chapter 5. Polygamy can certainly be an application, but not the main interpretation.

Position 3

3. He is a “one woman man”. He is not flirtatious, or he does not run around on his wife. He is not an adulterer or a fornicator. Although there are many verses in the whole Bible to support this truth for all Christians, many turn to the Greek for the meaning of the term “husband of one wife”. The Greek definitions are as follows.

(Note: The quoting of the Greek is mentioned only as to show the common method of determination of the belief of subuct. It is my belief that this interpretation is still feasible by comparing related verses and adhering to the context. This shows the beauty and accuracy of the KJV, that once you study in the Greek you realize you can draw the same conclusion from the context).

Husband (greek, aner): a man, fellow, husband, man, sir.

(Note: many times translated "man" in the NT).

One (greek, mia) one or first, a certain, agree, first, one.

(Note, there are many different words for "one" in the greek. This greek word "one" is the same word used in Ephesians 5:31 concerning husbands and wives "one flesh". Although it would be the tendency of some to say the definition is "first one", this word is also used:

-concerning Esau," who for one morsel of meat" Hebrews 12:16.

-abode with them one day Acts 21:7.

-fell in one day three and twenty thousand 1 Cor. 10:8.

-he ((Jesus)) had offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down Hebrews 10:12.

- many verses concerning marriage the NT uses this word for one.

in this light and with the word "certain" in the definition, it seems to be carrying the thought of one and only).

Wife (greek, gunē) a woman, a wife, wife, woman.

(Note: this is also the main translation for the word "woman" in the NT).

Those are the 3 main interpretations of the term "husband of one wife".

Now let's look briefly marriage in the Bible.

Part 2

Marriage in the Bible.

Biblical Marriage

1. It involved the desire between man and woman. They have love, one for another. This would mean that both have determined that this love is strong enough to last until one or both die. Now, this does not negate the fact that because we are human, and still have a sinful nature (hardness of heart), that things can go wrong, with one or both people, and there be a divorce. Matt. 19:3-12.

2. Marriage involved the approval of the family. Abraham sent for Isaac 's bride. Also Exodus 22:16-17.

3. The sexual act. Sex is to be only between 2 people married to each other. The act of sex is not the only thing that constitutes the marriage union. This has been suggested because of the statement by Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:16, that if you have had sex with someone, you are married to them.

1 Cor. 6:16, What? Know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body. For two, saith he, shall be one flesh.

Key word, “joined” means to glue, keep company. Not just a isolated sexual act. See: 1 Cor. 5:9,11 .

John 4:16-18 when Jesus was speaking to the woman at the well, he made this statement:

16: Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither. 17: The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband 18: For thou hast **had** five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

So the man that she now had, was not considered her husband.

Deuteronomy 22:28-29 gives this principle, that if a man was found to have had sex with a young woman who was not engaged to be married, he would have to pay a certain dowry to her father and marry her for life. So the sex act did not make them married.

So what did Paul mean in 1 Corinthians 6? Below are listed the verses in the bible that use the term one flesh. It is used in a family situation and referring to existing family members (blood kin).

One Flesh:

Gen. 2:21-24 – bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, one flesh. (marriage,husband and wife)

Judges 9:2 – your bone and your flesh (family)

2 Sam. 5:1, 1 Chron. 11:1 – (family as in Israel, nationally,racially)

2 Sam. 19:12-13 – (family as in Israel, nationally,racially)

Matt.19:5-6 – Marriage

Mark 10:8 – Marriage

1 Cor. 6:16 – Joining a harlot

Eph. 5:30 – with Christ, we are of His body, flesh and bones.

Eph. 5:31 – marriage

So I believe the point that Paul is making, is that if a man is married, he is only allowed to have sex with his wife (now family). Sex is for 2 people that are married to each other. And to do this act with another is taking the act of sex, which is for one person (one flesh), and doing that one flesh act with one who does not belong to him. Sex is 100% right and good, because the couple is one flesh.

Marriage in Gods eyes is with one woman. God allowed multiple wives but **seems** to want it with one woman. Same with divorce, it was allowed, but it is not what God would really want.

Part 3

The historical view on Husband of one wife.

Quotes from commentaries are given to show where different beliefs may have derived. Although polygamy was offered as an interpretation, it should be interpreted in the light of the statement made of widows in 1 Timothy 5:8 “wife of one man”. The parenthetical comment in italics, to the right of the commentary name was added by myself and gives the position stated in the quote. (See section on “Guidelines for Widows”).

John Calvin (1509-1564) (polygamy)

“husband of one wife—confuting the celibacy of Rome’s priesthood. Though the Jews practiced polygamy, yet as he is writing as to a Gentile Church, and as polygamy was never allowed among even laymen in the Church, the ancient interpretation that the prohibition here is against polygamy in a candidate bishop is not correct. It must, therefore, mean that, though laymen might lawfully marry again, candidates for the episcopate or presbytery were better to have been married only once. As in 1Ti 5:9, “wife of one man,” implies a woman married but once; so “husband of one wife” here must mean the same. The feeling which prevailed among the Gentiles, as well as the Jews (compare as to Anna, Lu 2:36, 37), against a second marriage would, on the ground of expediency and conciliation in matters indifferent and not involving compromise of principle, account for Paul’s prohibition here in the case of one in so prominent a sphere as a bishop or a deacon. Hence the stress that is laid in the context on the repute in which the candidate for orders is held among those over whom he is to preside (Tit 1:16). The Council of Laodicea (363-384 A.D.) and the apostolic canons (approx. 250 to 350 A.D.) discountenanced second marriages, especially in the case of candidates for ordination. Of course second marriage being lawful, the undesirableness of it holds good only under special circumstances. It is implied here also, that he who has a wife and virtuous family, is to be preferred to a bachelor; for he who is himself bound to discharge the domestic duties mentioned here, is likely to be more attractive to those who have similar ties, for he teaches them not only by precept, but also by example (1Ti 3:4, 5). The Jews teach, a priest should be neither unmarried nor childless, lest he be unmerciful [Bengel]. So in the synagogue, “no one shall offer up prayer in public, unless he be married” [in Colbo, ch. 65; Vitrina, Synagogue and Temple]”

Although JFB offers very good historical advice, the quote seems to indicate that it is just a good “rule of thumb” to practice this or that it would be better if this could be done along these guidelines. The bible is emphatic and uses the word “must” (3:2), that it must be done this way, and it precedes the list of qualifications. Later, in this study, we will discuss to what the “must” applies.

John Gill (1697-1771) (polygamy)

“The only true exposition, therefore, is that of Chrysostom, that in a bishop he expressly condemns polygamy, [50] which at that time the Jews almost reckoned to be lawful”.

Matthew Henry (1662-1714) (polygamy)

“He must be the husband of one wife; not having given a bill of divorce to one, and then taken another, or not having many wives at once, as at that time was too common both among Jews and Gentiles, especially among the Gentiles”.

John Gill (1697-1771) (polygamy)

“The husband of one wife; which is not to be understood in a mystical and allegorical sense of his being the pastor of one church, since the apostle afterwards speaks of his house and children, that are to be ruled and kept in good order by him, in distinction from the church of God; but in a literal sense of his conjugal estate; though this rule does not make it necessary that he should have a wife; or that he should not marry, or not have married a second wife, after the death of the first; only if he marries or is married, that he should have but one wife at a time; so that this rule excludes all such persons from being elders, or pastors, or overseers of churches, that were “polygamists”; who had more wives than one at a time, or had divorced their wives, and not for adultery, and had married others. Now polygamy and divorces had very much obtained among the Jews; nor could the believing Jews be easily and at once brought off of them. And though they were not lawful nor to be allowed of in any; yet they were especially unbecoming and scandalous in officers of churches. So the high priest among the Jews, even when polygamy was in use, might not marry, or have two wives, at once; if he did, he could not minister in his office until he divorced one of them (u). For it is written, Lev. 21:13 “he shall take a wife”, , “one, and not two” (w). And the same that is said of the high priest, is said of all other priests; see Ezek. 44:22.”.

Matthew Poole (1624-1679) (polygamy)

The husband of one wife; none who at the same time hath more wives than one, as many of the Jews had; nor was polygamy only common amongst the Jews, but amongst the other Eastern nations; but this was contrary to the institution of marriage. Some interpret this of successive marriage, as if it were a scandalous thing for a minister to marry a second time; but for this they have no pretence from holy writ, or reason, or the practice and custom of nations. Many persons lose their first wives so soon after marriage, that, were not second marriages lawful, all the ends of marriage must be frustrate as to them. The apostle commanding ministers to be the husbands but of **one wife**, doth not oblige them to marry, if God hath given them the gift of continency, but it establisheth the lawfulness of their marrying, against the doctrine of devils in this particular, which the Church of Rome teacheth.

Joseph Benson (1749-1821) (polygamy)

the husband of one wife — This neither means that a bishop **must** be married, nor that he **may not** marry a second wife; which is just as lawful for him to do as to marry a first, and may, in some cases, be his bounden duty. But whereas polygamy and divorce, upon slight occasions, were both common among the Jews and heathen, it teaches us that ministers, of all others, ought to stand clear of those sins. Macknight's reasoning on this subject is very conclusive. "That the gospel allows women to marry a second time, is evident from [1 Corinthians 7:9](#); [1 Corinthians 7:39](#). By parity of reason it allows men to marry a second time likewise. Therefore, when it is said here that **a bishop must be the husband of one wife**, and ([1 Timothy 5:9](#).) that the widow, who is employed by the church in teaching the young of her sex, must have been the **wife of one husband**, the apostle could not mean that persons who have married a second time are thereby disqualified for sacred offices. For in that case, a bishop whose wife dies while he is young, must lay down his office, unless he can live continently unmarried. The apostle's meaning, therefore, in these canons, is, that such persons only were to be intrusted with sacred offices who in their married state had contented themselves with one wife, and with one husband at a time; because thereby they had showed themselves temperate in the use of sensual pleasures; through the immoderate love of which the Asiatic nations universally practised polygamy. In like manner because, according to our Lord's determination, persons who divorced each other unjustly were guilty of adultery when they married themselves to others; also because such really had more wives and husbands than one at a time, as was the case with the woman of Samaria, ([John 4:18](#).) the apostle, to restrain these licentious practices, which were common among the Greeks and Romans, as well as among the Jews, ordered that no widow should be chosen to instruct the younger women, but such as had been the **wife of one husband only at a time**." **Vigilant**— Intent upon his duty, ready to resist temptation, and careful to preserve his flock from seduction;

Expositors Bible (approx. 1887-1890)

"3. We may pass over without much discussion the view that the phrases are a vague way of indicating misconduct of any kind in reference to marriage. No doubt such misconduct was rife among the heathen, and the Christian Church by no means escaped the taint, as the scandals in the Church of Corinth and the frequent warnings of the Apostles against sins of this kind show. But when St. Paul has to speak of such things he is not afraid to do so in language that cannot be misunderstood. We have seen this already in the first chapter of this Epistle; and the fifth chapters of 1 Corinthians, Galatians, and Ephesians supply other examples. We may safely say that if St. Paul had meant to indicate persons who had entered into illicit unions before or after marriage, he would have used much less ambiguous language than the phrases under discussion.

Lastly, this interpretation of the phrases in question is strongly confirmed by the views of leading Christians on the subject in the first few centuries, and by the decrees of councils; these being largely influenced by St. Paul's language, and therefore being a guide as to what his words were then supposed to mean. Hermas, Clement of Alexandria, of course Tertullian, and among later Fathers, Chrysostom, Epiphanius, and Cyril, all write in disparagement of second marriages, not as sin, but as weakness. To marry again is to fall short of the high perfection set before us in the Gospel constitution. Athenagoras goes so far as to call a second marriage "respectable adultery," and to say that one who thus severs himself from his dead wife is an "adulterer in disguise." Respecting the clergy, Origen says plainly, "Neither a bishop, nor a presbyter, nor a deacon, nor a widow, can be twice married." The canons of councils are not less plain, either as to the discouragement of second marriages among the laity, or their incompatibility with what was then required of the clergy.

I am listing this quote from the Expositors Bible in order to be fair and offer an opposing statement to the interpretation toward which this study seems to be heading. The point made here is true, concerning the first part of the quote: Paul had no problem whatsoever, calling sin for what it is. He came down on sin hard and heavy. There was not very many gray area's in Paul's writing concerning right and wrong. But it looks to me as though Paul, with the subject of Bishops, concerning adultery and fornication, is tackling the subject at the roots, and that root being, because you are married and have children. This is also saying it is best that you do have that family. He has a wife to meet his sexual need, and has experience raising children, and not just a book smart, arm chair father (so to speak). The word adultery or fornication is not used in 1 Timothy 3 or in Titus 1, when addressing the qualifications listed for a Overseer, but is surely established by the fact that the Bishop is married and is to be blameless (live a moral consecrated life). This is not to say a Bishop cannot be unmarried or widowed (in opposition the second part of the Expositor's Bible quote). Paul gives his views on that in 1 Corinthians 7. Paul was an unmarried preacher and missionary.

This word husband or man also establishes the fact that the Bishop is to be a male. The word "man" and "he" are used multiple times in the passage.

Part 4

The Guidelines for Widows – 1 Timothy 5: 3-14 “Wife of one man” vs 9.

Note that this is the same book and writer. This is the same phrase turned around and applied to a woman. With widows, is Paul referring to polyandry? I do not think so. There was not an issue with polyandry in Paul's day or in any time in history. Then, if not polyandry, is Paul saying, that a widow cannot be not divorced and remarried? If so, that means the apostle Paul is saying, this widow (meaning her husband is dead) is not allowed care of the church if she re-marries, after the death of her husband. But being a widow, means lawfully, she was free to marry after the first husband died (1 Cor. 7:39). This can apply even if she was married again and her second husband is dead, she is still equally free to marry after the second husband died, according to the law. So, why would Paul refuse the care of the church when she obeyed the law? What would make more sense is that she was a **one man woman**, she was faithful to her husband (or even both husbands) and was not an adulterer or a fornicator and that allows her to be eligible for widow's care, by the church. The context here is listing that she is living a consecrated life. This interpretation is more feasible, especially when Paul gives in this chapter, the approval for the younger widows to re-marry (vs 14). I must mention that verse 14 does say younger women, but the context, in verses before and after verse 14, is still addressing widows.

The point is made here to try to determine the interpretation of the phrase “wife of one man”, and that, in turn, helps to interpret the phrase “husband of one wife”. This phrase helps us rule out polygamy, because it is used in relation to a female, and polyandry was not an issue in Paul's day.

It also helps us in this case of widows, to rule out the subject of divorce and remarriage, because according to the law, if her husband is dead (she is a widow), she can lawfully remarry. That means that the phrase in relation to the Bishop is not referring to divorce and remarriage, but in both cases, their lifestyle. If the phrases are similar and designed to carry the same rule, it would not forbid divorce and remarriage with the Bishop but condone it with the widow. It would rule out the divorce interpretation for both. The argument could be made that the widow's husband is dead, and the widow can remarry but the Bishop cannot. In that case why is the phrase mentioned in relation to the widow at all? Because by the law she is free to remarry. It makes more sense, that it is mentioned because she is living a Godly lifestyle and has not been an adulterer or a fornicator.

So this phrase would have to mean, it is applying to the consecrated life, that the widow has been living and is still living. This would mean that the same point is being made in the subject of the Bishop. The consecrated life style is obviously what the verses surrounding both groups of people (overseers, deacons and widows) are trying to emphasize, and in the case of the Bishop, a blameless life.

Could it still apply to polygamy? Sure, especially when Exodus 21:13 applies this standard to the priest. But it only applies to polygamy in application and not interpretation. Polygamy has its own set of problems, that a Pastor would be wise to avoid. But it seems to me, the main interpretation is a clean “blameless” life style, (not a fornicator or adulterer). Which is the point of the context in 1 Timothy 3, 1 Timothy 5 and Titus 1.

The Truth of the 3 views and interpretations

1. Holding to the interpretation that this means a Pastor cannot be divorced and remarried, is safe ground. Yes, it is the best situation for him and all Christians if they are only married once. But, this is not always practical, which is why God allowed divorce in the first place. But as a primary interpretation, that this is meaning divorce and remarriage, **has been debatable** down through the ages and it is a practice that the bible condones. It seems also debatable with the facts as shown above.
2. Very few will deny the fact that polygamy is something to stay away from. A Pastor has his hands full with one wife, adding more could add problems to the Pastor and the congregation. Anyone who interprets "husband of one wife" as polygamy is on safe ground. But polygamy has been debated as a primary interpretation, again maybe because it has been condoned in the Bible.
3. **No one will disagree that a Pastor should not practice adultery and fornication.** Adultery and fornication have never been condoned in the Bible. There are verses from cover to cover that will back this up. In fact, with the admonition given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, if the "husband of one wife" phrase is talking about his marital status, that would mean adultery is not mentioned in the admonition of him living a consecrated life style. And that would apply to the deacons as well in verse 12. But if the interpretation is that he not commit adultery and run around on his wife, and he needs to be a one woman man, then it fits within the context of the verses. It also makes more sense with the thought process of verse 12, when addressing the Deacons. Verse 12 is a complete thought:

Vs 12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

Being remarried, at the time he is chosen to be a deacon, would not necessarily have anything to do with him ruling his household, but being a whore monger would have a definite effect on his household. The same would apply to the pastor.

The main thrust of all the verses dealing Bishops, Deacons and Widows, in Timothy and Titus, is the consecrated manner of life.

Of these three interpretations, point number three is the only one that has been wrong for the lifestyle of the child of God throughout the whole bible. Always.
Divorce and remarriage is condoned by God.
Polygamy in the OT was condoned by God.
Adultery and fornication have never been condoned by God.

The point here is that (under the heading of 3 views and interpretations), the interpretation of points 1 & 2, are have been debated by Christians and scholars down through the ages. But point 3 is not debated. For sure the Pastor must practice a clean, consecrated, moral lifestyle.

Conclusion

I have held to the divorce and remarriage interpretation of this passage all my Christian life. I have recently after studying this, as you see it written here, have changed my interpretation on this phrase “husband of one wife”. I still believe divorce should be for the cause of fornication. Not for just Pastors but all Christians. I also do not believe that this interpretation should be used as a license for a preacher to run around on his wife, get divorced and marry again and keep pastoring the whole time. Because, the whole point here is the lifestyle and adultery is something that should not be once named of the Pastors life.

Yes, I am divorced but am not remarried. And I also am a former Pastor. I have not Pastored for a long, long time. But if God leads in that area, I would surely follow Him, even if I was to be married again.

I am hoping that maybe some brother in the Lord, who may have thought he has been put on the shelf, because he is divorced and maybe even remarried, will be encouraged by the words here, in this study. Now, I am not saying read this and run right out and find a church or ministry. But I am saying if this has shed some light on your situation, then now is the time to prepare and pray. If you are divorced and single, or remarried, you have been through a lot. Make sure you are listening closely to the Lord. Make sure that your life meets all the qualifications of the Bishop. If a congregation calls you for consideration, then you can tell them, I have made some mistakes, but my life is in order as per the Word of God, and I am ready now, to move on for the Glory of God.

This is where we are, we are older and wiser. We have learned things some men will never know. We have had to rely on God like some people have never had to do. We are in a world where divorced is happening more than ever and marriage is look at so flippantly. God just might have a way, to take all we have been through, and use it for his Glory.

God does not use perfect people, God uses willing people.
Willing to let him have it all.
Willing to believe all His Word.
Willing to do all He says.....

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